

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1003

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor the employees and volunteers of Agricenter International upon the celebration of its 25th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly salute those agricultural institutions which have achieved significant milestones in their illustrious histories and bring great acclaim to the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International in Memphis is one such estimable institution which recently celebrated its 25th Anniversary; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International is the world's largest urban farm and research test facility; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, several Memphis business leaders and farmers conceived a center where farmers, agricultural businessman, and scientists from across the Nation and world could gather to see the latest technology in agricultural science exhibited and demonstrated under productive farm conditions; and

WHEREAS, the first Board of Directors for Agricenter International was chaired by Ned Cook of Cook Industries, and Mayor William N. Morris, Jr., appointed a five-member Shelby County Agricenter Commission, which was chaired by Hamilton Smythe III of the Yellow Cab Company; and

WHEREAS, following the 1982 Memphis Jobs Conference, Governor Lamar Alexander and the Tennessee State Legislature made \$4.5 million in tax revenue available to the Agricenter Commission, and Shelby County also provided support by contributing an additional \$2 million in construction funds; and

WHEREAS, 1,000 acres of farmland from the 4,500 acres of Shelby Farms was donated to Agricenter International; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International is home to a 140,000 square feet Exhibition Pavilion and Demonstration Center, and Dick Sneddon was employed in September of 1983 to head the professional staff of Agricenter International; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International has blazed a new trail which has forever changed agriculture in Tennessee and across the nation, and twenty-five years after its inception, Agricenter International is completely self-sufficient and contributes \$526 million annually to the Memphis and Shelby County economy; and

WHEREAS, Agricenter International's facilities and services include the Agricenter Showplace Arena, Catch'em Lake, Farmer's Market, 7,600 agricultural test plots, twenty-six farm research partners, educational programs, exhibition and meeting places, and an RV park for travelers; and

WHEREAS, throughout its distinguished twenty-five year history, Agricenter International has strengthened the state's economy from the ground up by supporting our farmers, creating new agricultural technology, and serving as a vital cornerstone of the Memphis community; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should honor and recognize Agricenter International for improving the business of farming in Tennessee and contributing to this State's rich agricultural history; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we congratulate the employees and volunteers of Agricenter International in Memphis upon the celebration of its 25th Anniversary, commend them for their steadfast dedication to the science and art of agriculture and their many contributions to the State of Tennessee, and wish them every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.